

**You Know What To Do – Please, Just Do It!**

**By Jason Jackson**

Wally Johnson lived in Mozambique, Africa. He found a young python, which he kept for a pet. One day Wally took his python to a sawmill to show it around. Much to his surprise, the manager called him an unadulterated idiot, informing him that his “python” was actually a Gaboon viper, one of the most feared snakes in Africa. Emphasizing his point with a revolver, the manager demanded Wally and friend leave immediately.

Eventually, Wally learned the “python” with which he had played was a *Bitis gabonica*, known to have the longest fangs and highest venom yield of any venomous snake. Before his enlightenment, he discovered one day that his “python” died, and he threw it into the bush. About a year later, he met a Gaboon viper in that spot (maybe the “dead” one, or another one); this encounter with his left leg was nearly fatal. He spent three hospitalized months in bed before he could walk, and it was a year before he could walk normally (Capstick 1-18).

Wally’s story reminds me of Solomon’s wise counsel: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death” (Proverbs 14:12, ESV). What you **think** is a python just might be a viper!

We live in a world where the teaching of Jesus is ridiculed. Christianity is for the uneducated and superstitious, we’re told; it’s the crutch of “weak people.” Would you allow a venomous creature to slither through your house at all—much less unattended? Of course not! But when we presuppose that certain things are harmless, they end up in the house.

The old serpent, the devil, has a message. He wants people to drink for a good time, explore their sexuality, and believe that sexual perversion is an alternative lifestyle. He wants us to think that profanity is acceptable communication, that violence works wonders, that lying is a necessity, and that true happiness is all the things that money can buy. He’ll use all available means to broadcast his message.

Passive parents allow exposure to this devilish worldview from dawn to dusk – daytime, primetime, “children’s” programming, advertising, Internet media, and music. The message is easily embedded, and unprotected children are harmed. Adults don’t walk away unscathed either.

The question is not debatable; media does influence. Common sense says you are what you think. Research documents the devastating effects of viewing and listening to immoral content. For example, read the Rand Corporation’s study, “Exposure to Degrading Versus Nondegrading Music Lyrics and Sexual Behavior among Youth,” which concludes that those who listen to a great deal of music with degrading sexual lyrics have sex sooner (Martino).

Is there any wonder why many children (and adults) deal with behavioral problems, academic disinterest, attention difficulties, borderline illiteracy, and at the same time are conditioned by the world?

As families fragment, spending less time together, values erode, and the plasma python turns out to be a virtual viper. The “high places” must be torn down. Take control of the negative influences of media today! Formulate family guidelines and enforce them. Become closer to each other; get closer to the Lord. “For, he that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: and let him turn away from evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears unto their supplication: but the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil” (1 Peter 3:10-12, ASV).

Here are four principles Christian families ought to adopt and enforce. First, immoral content must not be viewed or listened to – without exception. Second, TV, video games, music, and anything else that’s “plugged in” must be limited. Third, children must be supervised. Finally, it’s not enough to keep the bad stuff out; you have to put the good in. Paul wrote that while we must not be conformed to the world, we also must renew our minds (Romans 12:1-2). We must give God’s Word our attention and affection regularly (Psalm 1:1-2).

The worldly culture shouldn't take you by surprise, nor should its various delivery systems; you know the dangers. You also know what to do and what your family needs. Please, just do it!

## **Works Cited**

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